



MILFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

~ 2005 REPORT ~

The Conservation Commission has a vision of Milford. We call it "Neighborhoods to Wilderness". We envision connecting every neighborhood to Town parks, quiet trails, and large protected parcels.

In March, Milford voters overwhelmingly supported a key piece of this vision. The vote to purchase "The Mile Slip" by 75% of the voters converted 452 acres of undeveloped land to Town ownership. Since then the Commission has been working on the management plan for the property. The first step was to update the Town's Conservation Land Ordinance. The previous ordinance did not address specific users. We promised the voters that many more uses would be allowed on the Mile Slip property than is presently allowed on our other lands. The new property is large, remote and crossed by old roads. We are working with the NH ATV Club and the Wilton Lyndeborough Winter Wanderers, a snow mobile club, on trail layout and 'rules of the road'. These groups will be helping with construction, repairs and signage. In 2006 we will be laying out hiking trails.



Tucker Brook Town Forest was a big focus in 2005. There is a new trail that was built by the New England Mountain Bike Association. Another new trail has been laid out and approved. This new trail skirts the wetlands and will afford great viewing of mountain laurel in the spring. We expect the trail to be ready sometime during 2006. With volunteer labor and mostly donated materials, a very soggy section of trail in Tucker Brook Town Forest now offers walkers a dry boardwalk. Several dead trees along the trails were taken down. Ordinarily the Commission prefers to leave dead trees standing as homes for wildlife and as a source of insects as food for birds. Any tree that may threaten trail users is taken down and left to rot adding nutrients to the soil and home sites for little critters. Tucker Brook also boasts a permanent orienteering trail.

Orienteering can be enjoyed by the whole family and is a good way to hone your observation and compass skills.

Other fun adventures in Town include Letterboxing (there are 5 Letterbox locations in Milford, with more being planned). "Letterboxing is an intriguing pastime combining navigational skills and rubber stamp artistry in a charming "treasure hunt" style outdoor quest." <http://www.letterboxing.org/>.

Geocaching is another way to get out on the land with a purpose. There may be as many as 7 Geocaching sites in Town. "The basic idea is to have individuals and organizations set up caches all over the world and share the locations of these caches on the Internet. GPS users can then use the location coordinates to find the caches." <http://www.geocaching.com/>.

The Commission is planning an event for February 26th. The public will be invited to learn about trails in the area, where to go and what to do when you get there. Many conservation and recreational groups will be exhibiting in the Town Hall Auditorium all afternoon, from groups who educate children about the natural world; to mountain bike and snowmobile clubs; from trail builders to search dogs. There will be area maps, trail maps, and books of maps available. A local land trust will hold a silent auction. There also will be slide shows in the Town Hall Banquet Hall, a film and demonstration by the Canine Alert Search Team and much more.

For more information about what your Commission is doing or how you can help, see our Web site <http://www.milford.nh.gov/~conservation/> or call the office 672-6016. Trail maps can be picked up free of charge in the lobby of the Planning Department at Town Hall.

Submitted by
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Chair Milford Conservation Commission

